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ABSTRACT

Developed to promote the consistency and quality of English instruction and to support the English-language colleges of Quebec in this direction, the report presents an overview of English instruction at the college level and presents recommendations to the Minister of Higher Education and Science (MHES) and the English-language colleges. Part I begins with a discussion of the fact that a considerable number of students reach college with limited English language skills, explaining the scope of the problem, causal factors, and consequences. Subsequent chapters in this section look at the administrative and educational framework of compulsory English language and literature courses, review the steps taken by the English-language colleges to improve students' English-language skills, and identify problems associated with these initiatives and ways of overcoming them. Part II presents a rationale for intervention by the Conseil des Colleges, and offers principles and recommendations for English language instruction for the MHES and the English-language colleges. Recommendations for the MHES include the following: (1) define the chief objectives of English language and literature instruction; (2) reevaluate the series of compulsory courses and remedial courses; (3) introduce a specific student/teacher ratio for courses in language improvement, and provide sufficient resources to meet these ratios; and (4) provide additional funding for Learning Assistance Centers and faculty development where necessary. (PAA)

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CONSEIL DES COLLÈGES

AVIS AU MINISTRE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR ET DE LA SCIENCE

ENGLISH INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE COLLEGES

2210-0146

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Québec

ENGLISH INSTRUCTION
IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE COLLEGES

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Conseil des collèges
October 1990

This brief was adopted
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INTRODUCTION

Language quality has been a concern for many education systems throughout the world for a number of years. The state of the language as used by today's young people and the difficulties schools are experiencing in remedying the situation have led many to believe that language, particularly in the Western world, is in the throes of a crisis[1].

Québec is also plagued by this problem; in fact, the issue of language quality takes on particular significance here. For this reason, the Conseil des collèges decided to study language instruction at the college level and, in January 1989, submitted a brief to the Minister of Higher Education and Science on the instruction of French, mother tongue[2,3]. Analyzing this part of the problem separately, the Conseil gave priority to what seemed to be most urgent according to various evidence. Moreover, French, mother tongue instruction, affects a large majority of college students.

Another major part of the problem, however, needed to be analyzed, namely, the teaching of English as a mother tongue. During the Conseil's study of French instruction at the college level, several individuals pointed out that similar problems prevailed in the instruction of English. In this brief, the Conseil des collèges aims to examine this question.

The issue is dealt with here as an isolated problem, without referring systematically to its French-language counterpart — a problem with which the college community is well acquainted — or to the recommendations formulated by the Conseil on that subject.

Upon completion of its analysis, the Conseil proposes to the Minister of Higher Education and Science measures to ensure the consistency and quality of English instruction and to support the English-language colleges in their efforts in this direction. It is superfluous to demonstrate yet again that the development of language skills constitutes a key element in fundamental education (*formation fondamentale*). From this

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1. See Jacques Maurais (ed.), *La crise des langues* [Québec], Conseil de la langue française, and Paris, Le Robert, 1985, 490 p. The Norwegian Language Board recently expressed similar concerns in its newsletter *Språknytt* (No. 1, Vol. 17, 1989).

2. Conseil des collèges, *La qualité du français au collégial: éléments pour un plan d'action* [Québec], 1989, 56 p.

3. In this brief, the Conseil uses the terms "English, mother tongue" and "French, mother tongue" to refer to instruction in either language as if it were the students' mother tongue.

perspective, the quality of instruction in English, mother tongue, at the college level concerns the quality of education in general given in English-language colleges.

Moreover, the Conseil wants to ensure consistency within the college network and guarantee students the right to equal or equivalent treatment whether they pursue their college studies in English or in French. The general parameters of college education, as set out in the *Regulation respecting the basis of college organization*, apply in both cases. The Conseil therefore invites the Minister and the colleges to analyze a number of the characteristics inherent to the educational and administrative framework of English instruction.

Part I of this brief is devoted to a description of the current situation based in particular on consultations conducted by the Conseil in the English-language college and university communities, on documents submitted during these consultations and on the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial* [4].

In Part II, the Conseil establishes the principles of its brief based on an analysis of the situation, and submits recommendations to the Minister of Higher Education and Science and to the English-language colleges.

4. A preliminary analysis of the problem was conducted for the Conseil in 1988 by Claire Dumont.

PART I

ENGLISH INSTRUCTION AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL: AN OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION

The consultations conducted by the Conseil des collèges, not only in the English-language college community — with participants such as teachers, administrators, and learning assistance centre representatives — but also in the English-language university community[5], revealed that a considerable number of students reach the college level with limited English language skills. This reality and its impact on the quality and relevance of college education will be analyzed in the first chapter of this part of the brief.

In the second chapter, the Conseil looks at the administrative and educational framework of English language instruction.

An overview of the main steps taken by the English-language colleges to improve students' English language skills is presented in the third chapter, while the fourth chapter deals with a number of problems associated with these initiatives, and the needs expressed by the colleges to overcome them.

1. ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

"Un certain nombre d'élèves des collèges a de sérieux problèmes sur le plan de la langue (*1)," reads the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial* in the section dealing with English language and literature courses[6]. According to those most directly involved, many students display:

- significant shortcomings in basic reading and writing skills;
- writing difficulties concerning sentence and paragraph structure and composition;

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5. See the appendix for the complete list of consultation participants.

6. *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial 1988-1989*, Vol. 1, p. 1-66. All quotations are taken from the official French version of the *Cahiers*. The numbers preceded by an asterisk refer to the corresponding passages in the English version published by the DGEC, see Appendix 2.

- problems in using language as a communication tool to think, to organize ideas and to present them logically.

According to those consulted by the Conseil, these problems may be linked to a lack of interest in language and literature and to poor work methods, which result in a lack of self-confidence in the written language. There are also difficulties inherent to non-English speakers.

1.1 The Scope of the Problem

The problem is considered serious by all participants in the Conseil's consultations. However, we have no overall data based on a defined minimum level of skills as a point of reference which would enable us to define the problem as it exists at the college level in precise, quantitative terms. The available information does, however, provide sufficient indicators to draw a realistic, balanced portrait of the situation.

The pass rate of the Secondary V English examination is one of these indicators. Until now, this rate has been quite high, reaching 95 % in some years. According to Ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ) representatives, this examination was not a valid indication of the students' skill level; a new examination was thus introduced in June 1990, with better-defined pass criteria. MEQ representatives estimate that, with this new examination, the failure rate could jump from 5 % to 30 %.

This seems to indicate that, in the past, a considerable proportion of students at the secondary level obtained a pass mark falsely indicating a sufficient level of language skill to undertake college studies. It could be reasonably supposed that a number of these students did indeed go on to college. If this is true, the introduction of the new examination at the secondary level could reduce, in the coming years, the number of students entering college with insufficient English language skills.

Most English-language colleges have their new students write tests in order to place these students into a course befitting their level of competence in oral and written English. Some colleges make these tests compulsory for all those who enroll, while others limit them to students who had low marks upon leaving secondary school or who did not attend English secondary school. These are placement tests serving mainly to identify students requiring one or more remedial English courses[7]. Often, colleges are

7. The concept of *remedial course* will be defined further on.

forced to limit the number of places in this type of course and, because of this, seek to identify only those students whose English language skills are poorest. This partly explains the fact that the estimated number of students experiencing significant difficulties in English may vary considerably.

The results of these tests and the creation of remedial classes do, however, provide significant indications of the scope of the problem. The following data concern the situation in fall 1989 in the four English-language cegeps or campuses in the Montréal region:

- in one institution, the placement test showed that 10 % of all new students experienced difficulties with sentence structure, while a group of 9 % showed strong "interference" from one another language[8];

- in another cegep, it is estimated some 20 % of those enrolled require a remedial English course; in fall 1989, out of 166 sections in compulsory English courses, 26 were remedial;

- in a third cegep, 15 out of 127 sections were remedial;

- in the fourth college, out of a total of 5046 students taking compulsory English courses, 751 (15 %) were enrolled in remedial courses.

Based on these data, and considering that it is mostly first-year students who are placed in remedial courses, it would not be exaggerated to state that approximately 20 % of incoming students in English-language colleges lack the required preparation in English.

Teachers feel that the situation has deteriorated over the years and that they are receiving a growing number of students whose English language skills are insufficient. The situation will have to be closely monitored to determine whether these observations can be validated based on data already gathered in a number of colleges, and on data yet to be gathered in the entire English-language sector of the network.

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8. Also, 40 % of students experienced difficulties organizing ideas in a paragraph.

1.2 Explanatory Factors

Those participating in the Conseil's hearings have cited a number of causes or factors explaining this situation. Several of these are related to secondary-level instruction, but are neither categorical nor predominant. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the link between language and thought, it has been said that students completing secondary school have not sufficiently developed the capacity to think critically and express their thoughts articulately. Too often, they are used to merely finding the right answer to examination questions. It is also generally agreed that students have not acquired the cultural references essential to understanding the texts they will be reading at the college-level.

Moreover, a number of teachers mention a fairly recent school-related factor: a good number of students were enrolled in French immersion classes[9] at the elementary and secondary levels. It would appear that some of these students have problems in English, given that they have not developed sufficient basic skills in English, mother tongue.

However, the most often-cited causes are of a more general sociological nature. Laudable efforts to facilitate access to education have brought into the colleges a greater number of students lacking the general skills level necessary to succeed in college studies, as well as students with increasingly varied social backgrounds, where diverse cultural values and different reading and writing habits prevail.

The presence of a great many students, in several English-language colleges, whose mother tongue is other than English, is not a recent development and is not considered a problem in itself[10]. This phenomenon does however increase the problems linked to

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9. Students enrolled in such programs in English-language schools receive part of their instruction in French (apart from their courses in French as a second language). Based on a survey conducted in November 1989, such was the case for 54 % of elementary students and 25 % of secondary students (see Mary Campbell, *Situation de l'enseignement du français, langue seconde, dans les écoles anglophones du Québec*, Ministère de l'Éducation, Direction des services éducatifs aux anglophones, 1990, 45 p. + appendices). A number of studies show that this has no negative impact on learning English as a mother tongue.

10. Among newly enrolled students in DEC programs in English-language colleges, in fall 1986, 18 % listed French as their mother tongue, while 24 % listed a mother tongue other than French or English (see Mireille Levesque and Danielle Pageau, *La persévérance aux études. La conquête de la toison d'or ou l'appel des sirènes*, [Québec], Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Science, DGEC, [1990], 431 p.) At Vanier College, the proportion of students whose mother tongue is neither French nor English fluctuates from year to year but is generally around 40 %. At Dawson College, in 1989, this proportion stood at approximately 35 %. In both cases add to these figures 11 % to 13 % of Francophones. At John Abbott College, in 1989, French-speaking students represented 18 % of the population, while those whose mother tongue is neither French nor English made up 10 % (see Pierre Pagé and François Boulet, *L'Université du Québec et les communautés culturelles*, Sainte-Foy, Université du Québec, April 18, 1990, 56 p. + appendices).

the diversity of student backgrounds, where cultural differences and means of thought and expression are not always predictable. Teachers observe that several of these students speak two or even three languages fairly well, but write none of them correctly.

The search for the causes of this phenomenon regularly points to an even more global sociocultural factor, namely, the diminishing interest in reading and writing in favour of audio-visual and oral communication. For years now, the telephone has saved us much of the effort of letter writing; TV and videos provide us with broadcasts of all types (narrative, informative, entertaining, argumentative, etc.), live and in pictures. Even as we emphasize the influence of the environment and appeal to parental responsibility, our society as a whole continues to encourage technological development which facilitates more rapid and — it must be admitted — more efficient communication. It is not surprising, then, that many students show little interest in developing reading and writing habits.

1.3 Consequences

The problems in English experienced by many students have serious consequences for the quality of college education, not only in English classes but in all subjects. Poor language skills make it more difficult for these students to understand the subject matter and to give an account of what they have actually learned. The ability to acquire knowledge and to communicate it are two important aspects of fundamental education which are affected.

The presence in classrooms of students with these types of difficulties makes the teachers unsure of their ability to provide quality instruction to the class as a whole.

To counter these effects, the colleges feel obliged to offer remedial English courses with a limited number of students per section and provide other means of assistance, such as learning centres and tutoring sessions. However, these measures call for human and material resources, putting the colleges in a difficult position with regard to their priorities and imposing limits on the services they are able to offer.

Do these measures, of which we will provide a more detailed description further on, ensure students satisfactory English instruction? Opinions differ on this issue: some consider that upon leaving college, graduates have acquired a satisfactory knowledge of the language, while others express reservations.

Two of the three English-language universities, Bishop's and Concordia, now require that students possess sufficient language skills before obtaining their undergraduate diploma. All newly enrolled students must pass an examination which consists in writing a brief composition on a general subject, usually during their first term of study. The correction is done "holistically", which means that the corrector assesses globally the quality of the language and the expression of ideas. Students who fail the test can write it as many times as are required to pass, or they may take language courses, in which a pass mark means that their language skills are satisfactory.

What do the results of these tests show concerning the skills of college graduates? At Concordia University, where the examination can be taken in English or French, the failure rate for each sitting — there are four a year — is estimated at 24 %. Bishop's University provides identical data for 1988-1989: 24 % of graduates from cegeps and Québec private colleges who wrote the examination failed. If we take into account only those who listed English as their mother tongue, the failure rate at Bishop's University drops to 15%, and if we consider only English-language graduates from English-language colleges[11], the rate decreases yet again to 13 %. The failure rate for French-language graduates or graduates whose mother tongue is neither French nor English from English-language cegeps was 27 %. These figures seem to be confirmed by data obtained from Concordia University[12].

We can thus conclude that language problems observed in the colleges also affect universities to such a point that university failure rates correspond closely to the proportion of students considered weak in English when they enter college. The hearings revealed that the situation at Concordia University is considered highly unsatisfactory.

Employers have not been very vocal as concerns English language skills. It is true that the working language in Québec is French (at least in principle). Also, as concerns the use of English in the workplace, employers do not necessarily distinguish between graduates of an English-language college and those who learned English as a second (or third) language. However, based on Conseil information, the language test at Concordia University was introduced at the request of students who pointed out that employers were dissatisfied with the language quality in the job applications they received.

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11. Champlain, Dawson, John Abbott and Vanier. Graduates of Heritage College, at the time a campus of the Cégep de l'Outaouais, could not be identified.

12. These data reflect the proportion of failures for 10 examination sittings between March 1987 and May 1989 and the number of newly enrolled students in fall 1988. Comparison between these two sets of data, which do not necessarily affect the same individuals, can only give approximate results.

1.4 Conclusion

Based on these observations, it would appear that the general problem of the quality of English at the college level — at least as it is perceived and experienced in the community — resembles that already observed by the Conseil as concerns French in French-language colleges, namely, the type of student difficulties, their main causes, and their consequences for the quality of education.

As concerns the scope of the problem or the gravity of the situation, the Conseil nonetheless wishes to avoid any exaggeration. Opinions in the teaching community are diverse[13]; those of the public and employers are hardly known; documentation is scarce. It is clearly deplorable that a significant proportion of those enrolling in college — approximately 20 % — experience considerable language difficulties and that, strangely enough, an almost identical number of graduates from English-language colleges fail the university English tests. Steps to remedy this situation must be taken, which brings the Conseil to submit this brief to the Minister. This said, this "failure" rate of the education system and the level of dissatisfaction in the English-speaking community do not appear overly alarming.

English teachers also feel they have the necessary tools to assist students experiencing difficulties in English; what they are lacking is support in their efforts.

This brings the Conseil to examine, in the following two chapters, the structure of compulsory English language and literature courses, and specific measures adopted by English-language colleges to assist students experiencing difficulties in English.

2. ORGANIZATION OF ENGLISH INSTRUCTION

Students enrolled in a program leading to a diploma of college studies (DEC) must take four language/literature courses. For students enrolled in English-language colleges, these are English courses. General information on these courses, that is, course descriptions

13. The proceedings of the Estates General on the Quality of Education, held in Montréal in April 1986, do not mention any problem specific to instruction in English, despite the fact that a workshop was devoted to this issue.

and objectives, can be found in the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial* under the heading "603 English Language and Literature"[14].

These four compulsory English courses are not the only way to improve language skills; students also learn in their other courses by listening to teachers' lectures, reading texts, writing papers and making oral presentations in the classroom. After having examined the English language and literature courses, English instruction should be viewed from a broader outlook within college education as a whole.

2.1 Compulsory English Courses

The colleges must choose the compulsory English language and literature courses they will offer from the list in the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial.* This list, or "bank", includes a total of 43 courses, namely, 27 literature courses and 16 language (or linguistics) courses[15]. First, we will briefly examine the 27 literature courses and four of the sixteen language courses before looking at the remaining twelve, which are described as *rattrapage* courses.

2.1.1 Literature and Linguistics Courses

Most literature courses are divided into five major categories (national literature, historical period, thematic studies, survey of literature, literature and other media), each including four courses. The literary nature of these courses is obvious; however, the *Cahiers* read:

> L'étude de la littérature est l'objectif premier des cours en cause, mais cet objectif ne doit pas évincer le développement de l'écriture, ce qui impose l'application rigoureuse du critère selon lequel l'écriture compte pour un tiers, tant dans le contenu que dans l'évaluation. (*2)

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14. Except where otherwise indicated, quotations from this chapter are taken from the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial 1989-1990*, Vol. 1, p. 1-64 to 1-66. The reader will remember that the numbers preceded by an asterisk following the quotations refer to the corresponding passages in the English version of the *Cahiers* which are reproduced in Appendix 2.

15. This set of courses, established in 1984, differs from the previous one, which included 25 literature and linguistics courses and only 2 language courses (Reading and Writing I and II), introduced in 1979.

The multitude of courses and approaches to the study of literature is justified, according to the *Cahiers* and the teachers, by the rich cultural heritage and the diversity of student needs.

In addition to these twenty courses, there exists a series of seven course numbers, each pertaining to a specific literary form (poetry, short story, essay, novel, drama). The wording in the *Cahiers* leads us to believe that these are not seven courses but seven course categories; in other words, a college could offer several different poetry courses, for instance, all bearing the same number. The aim of these courses is similar to that of other courses: "familiariser les élèves avec leur héritage littéraire et leur faire comprendre l'importance de bien écrire (*3)."

Among the sixteen language courses, there are four specialized linguistics courses entitled Linguistics, Rhetoric, Journalism and Creative Writing. These courses, given at a relatively advanced level, "offrent à l'élève la possibilité de parfaire leur [sic] expression écrite dans des domaines variés (*4)."

Three characteristics of the courses described above should be mentioned. First, the aim of most of these courses is clearly literary. The course titles do not mirror the wider communication perspective introduced in 1985 in the French program.

However, in addition to these literary objectives, there is also the development of students' writing ability which must be reflected in one third of the content and evaluation of literature courses.

Lastly, the number and variety of courses are striking and may be even greater than they appear because, in certain cases, the colleges seem to be authorized to offer different courses all bearing the same number.

2.1.2 So-called *Rattrapage* Language Courses

A set of twelve language courses listed in the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial* since 1984 are broken down into three *rattrapage* levels, ranging from a very basic level to a transitional level between secondary and college. Currently, students can take several of these courses as their compulsory English courses. We shall therefore study them more closely.

Four courses make up the first level of language courses under the heading "Language Use"[16]. These courses are offered almost exclusively to students whose mother tongue is neither French nor English[17], and are defined as follows:

> Les cours de cette catégorie portent sur l'apprentissage de la langue. Le premier objectif de ces cours d'anglais élémentaire dans le cadre des programmes d'études collégiales est de bien préparer l'élève aux cours de langue des autres niveaux. Ils sont axés sur des exercices de lecture et de l'écriture mais ils peuvent comporter des exercices oraux. Ces cours s'adressent aux élèves qui n'ont qu'une connaissance rudimentaire de la langue, même s'ils ont déjà suivi des cours d'anglais. (*5)

In the second level, under the heading "Effective Reading and Writing", are listed another four courses[18] which are defined as follows:

> Les cours de cette catégorie visent à porter la connaissance de la langue de l'élève à un niveau collégial. Le cours permet à l'élève d'acquérir suffisamment de pratique en lecture et en écriture pour suivre les cours de langue anglaise de niveau plus élevé ou les cours du programme commun de littérature. Ces cours servent à affiner les habiletés d'interprétation et d'expression de l'élève dont la lecture et l'écriture, bien que fonctionnelles, nécessitent des connaissances plus approfondies. (*6)

The *Cahiers* thus state explicitly that these courses are not at the college level as such.

The third level includes the four Composition and Literature courses[19]:

> Les cours de cette catégorie remplissent une double fonction: pour les élèves dont les habiletés langagières sont satisfaisantes mais plutôt faibles, ils servent d'introduction aux études littéraires de l'enseignement collégial en mettant plus l'accent sur l'interprétation de textes et sur la composition d'essais littéraires que ne le font les cours communs de littérature: ils servent également de transition entre les cours de niveau inférieur et les cours communs. Bien que ces cours portent sur l'étude de la littérature et sur les productions de divers médias, les exercices de rédaction en constituent l'objet principal. (*7)

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16. These courses are numbered 603-106, 603-206, 603-306 and 603-406.
17. Teachers of English language and literature have pointed out, however, that they do not teach English as a second language.
18. Numbers 603-107, 603-207, 603-307 and 603-407.
19. Number 603-108, 603-208, 603-308 and 603-408.

This is the limit between what has traditionally been considered the secondary and college levels of instruction[20]. The aim is to reinforce the writing skills of students experiencing some difficulties in English. In some colleges, such a course follows a course from one of the preceding levels, for students who still require it.

The *Cahiers* call these *rattrapage* courses for all three levels. This term is poorly accepted by English teachers, who prefer the English term "remedial courses"[21]. Whatever the case, the first two series of courses, Language Use (106 to 406) and Effective Reading and Writing (107 to 407), may be considered remedial or upgrading courses, meaning that they target students who have not acquired the necessary or expected language skills upon entering college, and that the objective is to provide them with such skills.

Several people have declared that the course descriptions found in the *Cahiers* do not correspond to their actual content or scope. Others, meanwhile, are of the opinion that the courses in series 106 to 406 are not truly college-level courses; this is confirmed by certain course outlines submitted to the Conseil. As concerns courses in the series 107 to 407, they would have to be assessed individually.

The Composition and Literature courses (108 to 408) could be considered "transitional" between the secondary and college levels.

2.2 Objectives of the Compulsory English Courses

The general objectives of the compulsory language and literature courses are contained in the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial.* Those for English instruction are formulated very generally, stating:

> L'éducation a pour but de développer la faculté de penser, cette faculté si intimement liée à la faculté de s'exprimer: formuler, organiser, goûter et communiquer aux autres ce que l'intelligence parvient à saisir. (8)

Further on, we learn that the compulsory core courses:

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20. The objectives of these courses correspond closely to the "basic course" proposed by the Conseil as a compulsory French course in its brief *La qualité du français au collégial...*

21. However, based on dictionary definitions, the two terms are equivalent.

> ...visent d'abord à initier les élèves à l'étude de la langue et de la littérature, en même temps qu'à développer chez eux la capacité et le goût de lire, d'écrire et de s'exprimer. (9)

We have already seen that the specific objectives of the literature courses are scarcely more explicit as concerns language skills; the phrases used are "writing development" and "to make students understand the importance of writing well".

Thus, there is no indication of the level of English language skills that students are to have reached at the end of their college studies; although it is apparent that the ability to ***read*** concerns texts of a literary nature, it is still unclear which types of texts students should be able to ***produce***, both orally and in writing. Students, parents, the interested public, employers and university professors will not easily understand the language skills targeted by these courses; even teachers will have difficulty finding clear indications in the *Cahiers* of the language objectives this instruction should aim for.

2.3 Responsibility of all Teachers

Although the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial* do not specify English instruction objectives, they state clearly that "la responsabilité touchant la qualité de la langue anglaise incombe à l'ensemble du personnel du collège, quelle que soit la discipline (*10)." The Conseil fully supports this statement concerning English instruction, but does observe that it is contained under the heading English courses, whereas it should be part of a more general reference addressing all teachers, if not of each program description.

Is it because people are not aware of this statement that in both English-language and French-language colleges it appears necessary to remind teachers of their responsibility with regard to the development of language skills[22]? In any case, the same type of problem seems to prevail throughout the college network, either because teachers do not feel that it is their responsibility, or because they do not consider themselves sufficiently equipped for the task.

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22. For the French-language sector, this collective responsibility as concerns language instruction has not been mentioned in the *Cahiers* for the last few years, for reasons unknown to the Conseil.

2.4 Summary

The English language and literature courses display some specific characteristics. First, their number — 27 literature courses and 16 language courses and, in addition, the various courses the colleges may offer under the same course number. Also, the 16 courses focusing on language are offered at different levels:

- a series of elementary courses;
- another series of remedial or upgrading courses;
- a series of transitional courses which serve as stepping-stones between the secondary and college levels;
- a fourth series of veritable college-level, language-oriented courses.

It should also be noted that the English courses focusing on language skills, regardless of their level, count in the students' programs as credits toward their diploma and even among the four compulsory language and literature courses in the DEC programs. In this respect, the *Cahiers* state:

> Il n'est pas habituel que les élèves choisissent leurs quatre cours communs obligatoires dans les catégories de langue. Lorsque cela se produit, c'est que les circonstances sont considérées comme exceptionnelles... (*11)

In other words, three of the four English language and literature courses can be remedial or "transitional" courses without this being considered exceptional[23]. Thus it appears that, parallel to the regular language and literature path, the *Cahiers* have opened, for English-language colleges, more or less "lightened" streams.

One of the results of this course structure is that students with difficulties in English can obtain upgrading assistance within their four compulsory courses. This becomes a means of assistance which falls under students' regular programs, provides them with credits toward their diploma and is funded based on the usual compulsory course standards.

Furthermore, the wide range of language and literature courses and the responsibility on the part of college staff as a whole to contribute to language quality seems to give anglophone colleges a considerable leeway in the organization of English instruction, both within English courses and through other subjects. Also, it is left entirely to the

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23. In practice, some colleges or campuses limit the number of these courses which can be credited as compulsory to two or three.

colleges to define the specific objectives of this instruction. In this way, the legislative framework provides them with all the latitude needed to implément several recommendations formulated by the Conseil concerning French instruction, particularly:

- to specify (albeit locally) the objectives of English instruction;
- to involve all college employees in achieving these objectives;
- to see that all students receive an adequate education in writing papers;
- to offer effective remedial courses.

We will now look at a number of initiatives taken by the colleges and the difficulties with which they are faced in their efforts to provide students with the best possible English instruction.

3. STEPS TAKEN BY THE COLLEGES

Among the steps the English-language colleges have taken to improve the quality of students' English are the aforementioned placement tests. The administration and evaluation of these tests require specific resources; in some cases, each test is evaluated by more than one teacher.

There is also the creation of remedial or "transitional" language courses. Offering courses mentioned in the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial* may not be perceived as a specific measure; however, for these courses to be effective, the number of students per section must be limited, generally to a maximum of 20 to 25. Since there is no particular standard governing the assigning of teaching positions for these courses, it is the responsibility of each institution to provide the necessary additional resources, at the expense of other activities. Often, it is within the English department itself that these resources are found, by increasing the number of students per section in the other English courses.

Most English-language colleges in the Montréal region have a learning assistance centre[24] which offers various services to students, who come on their own initiative or on the recommendation of their teacher to develop, individually or in a group, work methods

24. The *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial 1989-1990* refer to these centres as one of the educational tools which can be used in the English upgrading courses (p. 1-65). One of the colleges has both a learning centre and a writing centre.

or reading and writing skills, or to consult various documents compiled by the centre. The operation of these centres is ensured by volunteers and/or administrative and professional staff. The Department has subsidized the creation of at least one of these centres, but their operation is ensured by the regular college budget. A tutoring system, conducted by teachers or by students, is often available through the centre; in some cases, this service is provided by students enrolled in instructorship courses.

These measures, the organization of language skills courses and learning centre activities are all considered effective. In one college in particular, their implementation is considered to have increased the students' persistence and success rate in their program as a whole.

It should also be noted that during the last weeks of the summer vacation, some colleges organize upgrading courses for incoming students.

In order to enable teachers as a whole to assume their responsibilities as concerns language quality, some English teachers in the English-language colleges are heading a project called "Literacy Across the Curriculum." This project is aimed at making teachers in all disciplines aware of the importance of mastering language as a vehicle for intellectual pursuits, and at encouraging them to have students read and write in all courses. The project's ultimate goal, as indicated by its title, is to develop reading and writing skills throughout all courses in a program of studies.

4. THE NEEDS OF ENGLISH INSTRUCTION

As we have seen, the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial* provide considerable leeway for English, mother tongue instruction, leaving the responsibility to the colleges to specify its content and objectives. Also, the English departments and pedagogical committee are working toward this and, in some cases, departmental policies have already been established. This does not prevent several teachers and administrators from feeling that there should be more exchanges and discussions among teachers and colleges concerning teaching methods and content. They feel there is a need to agree on objectives, work on the curriculum, evaluate the courses and instruction, set priorities and establish action to be taken. The students should be made aware of the English-language requirements in all subjects.

Some people find that the content of the current English program lacks coherence and relevance. They suggest reducing the number of courses currently listed in the *Cahiers* whose definition is in any case so broad as to permit a wide range of contents.

English courses are not currently required to be sequential, a factor which probably contributes to concern over the coherence of the program. This does not apply to language courses which, as we have seen, are designed to enhance learning progression.

Those from the college community consulted by the Conseil emphasized that responsibility as concerns the content and structure of English courses must be assumed by college teachers, departments and administration; however, they expressed the desire to have central authorities provide increased support to encourage the necessary communication and step up information dissemination.

As concerns human resources, several people have pointed out that the mandate of English teachers is difficult to fulfill. Students should have to do some writing each week, but with current student enrollment, this seems impossible given the amount of correction required — and without adequate correction, the students do not learn. Many feel that a specific standard should apply to language courses so as to limit the number of students per section without overcrowding the literature sections. A change in course weighting could leave more time for practical writing exercises. The formula of calculating the individual load is also criticized: English teachers feel this formula gives unacceptable results.

The colleges thus feel they need increased resources to set up the required number of sections for language courses; many believe it is no longer possible to ask the teachers of other English courses to bear the brunt of these measures. However, it is not a case of reducing the issue of resources to a lack of English teachers. Resources are needed for various other assistance measures (learning centres, reading and writing in all courses, counsellors, academic advisors) and for faculty development. The necessary resources should also be available to improve the compulsory English courses.

In short, in the opinion of the college community, educational tools exist (courses, learning centres, means of encouraging reading and writing in all courses), the administrative structure is operational (departments, educational services, pedagogical committee), and the will to take action is there. Only financial and moral support are lacking.

Through the new collective agreements, 125 teaching positions dedicated to various measures aiming to increase the effectiveness of studies, especially in first year, have been added to the college network. The positions are allocated to the cegeps based on their student population. Through this measure, the English-language colleges receive close to 22 additional positions for the 1990-1991 school year.

PART II

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THE BASIS FOR INTERVENTION BY THE CONSEIL DES COLLÈGES

Analysis of the information gathered leads the Conseil to conclude that full-fledged, serious problems affect the English language skills of many students enrolled in English-language colleges, and often persist after they graduate. These language problems resemble those experienced by students in French-language colleges, by their nature, causes and consequences. And these consequences are serious for the students concerned, but they also affect the entire student population of the Anglophone colleges.

Language is the main communication tool which makes learning possible; it is mainly through language that students can display their achievements; language and thought are inextricably linked; in short, language constitutes a central element of fundamental education. Offering English instruction without taking the necessary steps to ensure that students acquire an adequate language education would be illogical. Students who enroll in English-language colleges are entitled to quality instruction in English.

Therefore, students who lack the necessary English skills upon entering college must have access to upgrading services enabling them to continue their studies at what is really the college level. To skimp on such services on the pretext that students would be "penalized" is to let them in for an unpleasant surprise in university or on the labour market. Providing the necessary assistance by overcrowding regular English classes, which may currently include 40 students or more, is unfair to these students, because it means they do not receive the support they need to progress at an appropriate rate.

Having said this, comments from various sectors on the significance and scope of the problem are often discreet or moderate; at times they are contradictory. Furthermore, available figures can be interpreted differently. The fact that 20 % of students and even of graduates have insufficient English language skills can be seen as proof of significant flaws in the system; on the other hand, it means that four out of five students succeed reasonably well in English, not a bad performance for the Anglophone sector given that for a considerable proportion of the student population, English is not the mother tongue.

In conclusion, the Conseil takes notice that many students have difficulties in English and considers that action must be taken to provide them the necessary assistance, but that the general situation does not require complete overhaul.

The educational framework appearing in the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial* leaves the English-language colleges considerable leeway to establish the objectives, content and conditions of English instruction. The general objectives; the wide variety of courses proposed, including a series of remedial and transitional courses between the secondary and college levels; the obligation to set aside, even in literature courses, considerable time for improving language skills; the obligation of all teachers to ensure the quality of English: these elements provide English-language colleges with tools to carry out activities similar to those the Conseil recommended to improve the quality of French instruction. The Conseil can only encourage the colleges to continue their efforts in this direction.

Given that the responsibility for college education is divided between the colleges and the Department under a *régime pédagogique* which applies to the entire network, this situation nevertheless raises questions about the quality and coherence of education and equity for all students. How can we affirm that students have — or have not — acquired the necessary English skills in the absence of precise, generally acknowledged objectives? How can we ensure students of a coherent, quality education, given the plethora of courses which allow for extremely diverse learning paths? Without providing definitive answers to these questions, the Conseil feels that they must be examined seriously.

During its hearings, the Conseil observed, in the English-language college community, a certain fear of having an educational model imposed on it which would be incompatible with the dissemination of a cultural heritage which has its focal point in the compulsory language and literature courses. Whether such fears are justified or not, the Conseil sees no reason to modify the general nature of English courses which, according to the description in the *Cahiers*, deal with both language and literature. On the contrary, as long as the objectives pertaining to language skills are achieved — once they have been defined — this system seems perfectly valid.

On the other hand, the specific nature of the Anglophone sector must not compromise the students' right to quality education and equal treatment, regardless of the language in which they choose to do their college studies.

Lastly, it is important to acknowledge the steps taken by English-language colleges to help students with difficulties in English. These steps, which often force the colleges to dip into their funds slated for other activities, are in themselves proof of the existence of the problem of English instruction and the importance accorded it by the colleges.

Thus, considering the importance of language as a part of education and the issues of coherent college education and equity for all students, the Conseil feels that action must be taken to support English instruction in English-language colleges.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Objectives

The objectives of English instruction outlined in the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial* are formulated in extremely general terms, to such a point that the Conseil des collèges has difficulty seeing how they can guide instruction, shape the structure of programs or influence learning evaluation. Naturally, each college can and does formulate its own more specific objectives but this is hardly sufficient given the network structure. The Conseil feels that the Minister must ensure that the objectives of college-level instruction of English, mother tongue be clearly defined.

In the discussions between the Conseil and the members of the English pedagogical committee, the latter pointed out that the general nature of the *Cahiers*' wording is due not to disagreement, but to the fact that several more specific objectives pertaining to language skills seem obvious. The outline of the objectives for English instruction already affect an important aspect of fundamental education, namely, the link between language and thought. However, considerable progress remains to be made in determining the place of language development in colleges within the scope of fundamental education, and in specifying terminal language objectives as precisely as possible..

It is essential that, during these discussions, links be established with secondary school and university representatives to take into account in a proper way the expectations and achievements of each level of education.

1) **The Conseil recommends that the Minister of Higher Education and Science**
   - **have the chief objectives of English language and literature instruction defined, particularly as concerns acquiring language skills;**
   - **ensure that they target harmonization with secondary- and university-level instruction;**
   - **see that the objectives thus defined are outlined in the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial*.**

2.2 The Bank of Compulsory Courses

The Conseil des collèges questions the considerable number of courses listed in the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial* from which both the colleges and the students can choose their compulsory English language and literature courses[25]. The diversity of courses is even more considerable than it appears, because the colleges change or specify the course titles and offer several variations of a single course listed under a given number[26].

The *Cahiers* justify this variety of courses by the richness of our cultural heritage. The teachers cite other reasons, such as the diverse needs of the students of each college or campus, and their own different main areas of interest. While it is convinced of the richness of the English culture, and of the fact that students have different learning needs, the Conseil is not sure that this justifies such a wide variety of courses. As for teachers' preferences, they can generally be taken into account by choosing the texts to be studied and the teaching methods to be used. Regardless of the reasons which have resulted in the constitution of such a large course bank, the Conseil wonders if maintaining it is in keeping with the targeted coherence of college education, programs and network. Much like the social studies program to date, it is difficult to deny that the wide variety of courses offered, combined with the absence of specific objectives, may result in largely differing scenarios.

Nevertheless, the Conseil observes with satisfaction the will to improve students' language skills, whatever their level upon entering college. This will was clearly displayed with the introduction of the series of language courses in 1984. According

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25. Only in the cegeps and campuses with a larger student population is there a real choice of English courses; the Héritage Cegep and St. Lawrence Campus each offer only a series of four courses.

26. For example, in 1988-1989, one college offered no less than eight different courses all bearing the number 603-108.

to the Conseil, this is a significant achievement, regardless of other considerations such as the number of courses or their place in the bank of compulsory courses.

2) **The Conseil des collèges recommends that the Minister of Higher Education and Science re-examine the English language and literature courses which may constitute the four compulsory courses in the programs leading to the diploma of college studies, in order to:**
   - **see that the courses maintained correspond to the defined objectives;**
   - **ensure that the courses facilitate the establishment of coherent learning paths.**

2.3 Remedial Courses

Cegeps are to provide college-level instruction, as stipulated in Section 2 of the *General and Vocational Colleges Act*. According to the *Cahiers de l'enseignement collégial*, the remedial courses in series 603-106 to 603-406 and 603-107 to 603-407[27] are not college-level courses; their objective is to bring the students' skill up to this level. This, then, is a contradiction in terms.

The fact that colleges offer government-funded remedial or upgrading courses should hardly be considered scandalous; on the contrary, this measure provides harmonious access to college studies and contributes to increasing the persistence and success rate in these studies. Also, the Conseil des collèges has recommended recourse to such educational measures, in the form of courses or otherwise, in several of its recent reports and briefs, and strongly encourages the English-language colleges to continue providing this form of assistance to all students requiring it.

The problem the Conseil sees here is whether or not to consider such courses as part of the college programs and to count these credits among those required to obtain a diploma. Let us keep in mind that these are not complementary courses, but courses which can be included among the four regular compulsory language and literature courses.

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27. That is, the courses appearing under the headings Language Use and Effective Reading and Writing.

The Conseil's position on this issue is that all remedial courses must be considered non-credit courses. This also seems to be the approach adopted by the Direction générale de l'enseignement collégial (DGEC) in setting up French remedial courses[28].

It is certainly not easy to distinguish between "college-level" instruction and instruction which aims to upgrade students to this level. English teachers pointed out to the Conseil that even in remedial courses, the texts used are of considerable literary quality and, in this sense, are indeed college-level courses. Some even wonder if the objective is not the language skill level achieved upon termination of studies rather than the level at which students started or, in other words, if it is not the teaching results we should be considering rather than the educational means used to achieve them.

The Conseil readily admits that such remarks merit consideration. Indeed, even if the presence of remedial courses in the bank of compulsory courses raises several questions of principle, it indicates a clear position on two issues which concern the Conseil.

The first of these is the acknowledgement of the fact that language skills are a major objective of college instruction, that the necessary steps must be taken to fulfill this objective, and that language and literature courses must be the main medium. Indeed, the acquisition of language skills is of paramount importance. It is not necessary to develop or justify this statement: educators, those in charge of the education system and observers, all agree. The college community is converging in its opinion that it is unacceptable for college graduates to have completed thirteen years of study and received over two thousand hours of language instruction without acquiring sufficient reading and writing skills. If, for whatever reason, students show language difficulties upon entering college — despite the fact that they hold their secondary diploma or the equivalent — steps must be taken to remedy this situation during their college studies.

The second issue is the consideration of the needs of Allophone students[29]. By offering them courses adapted to their language skill level, these students can be guaranteed, during their college studies, the indispensable tool of expression and of intellectual work that is language.

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28. Léon-Gérald Ferland and Ernesto Sanchez (project director), *Mise à niveau en français à l'entrée des collèges*, April 1990, 135 p.

29. More specifically, the needs of those among them who do not have a sufficient grasp of the language of instruction.

It must still be determined, however, if the students to whom remedial courses are recommended actually achieve the terminal objectives of English instruction. By making language tests compulsory for everyone, universities show that they harbour doubts as to this subject, and with good reason, as test results seem to indicate.

Although other justifiable alternatives exist, the Conseil is convinced that the position taken in several of its recent reports is valid for English courses as well. This position holds that any remedial or upgrading measures adopted, whether in the form of courses or otherwise, must be considered non-credit.

Within this perspective, after more in-depth analysis, the status of English remedial courses must be reconsidered, at least those at the basic level, which are the Language Use series (603-106 to 603-406). Also, it should be ensured that all students have the opportunity to take at least one course in which writing is the main activity, or else that writing does indeed occupy an important position in the literature courses.

Regardless of the formula used for the mother tongue remedial courses, the Conseil considers it essential that their status be the same in French-language and English-language colleges. It does not admit that colleges could be able to apply various forms of the *régime pédagogique* and that courses of an equivalent level may entitle students to program credits in one case and not in another. This is a question of equal treatment which affects Allophone students among others.

3) **The Conseil des collèges recommends that the Minister of Higher Education and Science examine the status of English remedial courses, especially those in the Language Use series (603-106 to 603-406), taking into account student needs, education quality, and the need for equity and coherence in the college network, and examine seriously the possibility of making these non-credit courses.**

2.4 The Conditions of Language Instruction

To work efficiently toward improving language skills, English-language colleges are reducing the number of students per group to 20 or 25 in the 106, 107 and 108 course series. Since there exists no specific, network-wide standard governing the student/teacher ratio for these courses, this reduction is detrimental to the other courses, where the number of students is increased as a consequence.

Those who teach mother tongue courses, whether English or French, have frequently stressed the difficulties they encounter trying to work efficiently to improve language skills, given the number of students and the time available. The Conseil feels it is time to take these comments seriously. The issue is not merely one of working conditions which can be resolved by negotiating a collective agreement, but first and foremost one of pedagogy which calls for a coherence between educational objectives and teaching organization.

In its brief on the quality of French instruction, the Conseil recommended the creation of a compulsory French course focusing on writing, weighting this course so as to permit practical exercises with small groups of students[30], and applying a specific standard to assigning teaching positions to such a course.

The Conseil feels that such a measure is also called for in the case of English instruction in the English-language colleges. The implementation will be different, since we are already dealing with a wide variety of language courses, the student being allowed to follow several of them. The Conseil does not feel it is useful to propose a mechanism to this end, but wishes to state that language courses[31] must benefit from a specific standard for the allocation of teaching positions and that English-language and French-language colleges must receive equivalent treatment in this respect.

4) **The Conseil des collèges recommends that the Minister of Higher Education and Science:**
   - **introduce a specific student/teacher ratio for courses targeting language improvement;**
   - **ensure that English-language and French-language colleges are treated equally in this respect;**
   - **allocate the additional resources necessary so that this measure does not increase the number of students per teacher in the other courses.**

30. French teachers recommend applying this measure to all compulsory French courses.

31. That is, courses in French or English, mother tongue, of which the main objective or one of the main objectives is to improve language skills.

2.5 Learning Assistance Centres

English-language colleges focus largely on their learning assistance centres[32] which help students experiencing academic difficulties, whether in English, other subjects, or work methods. One college in particular has, in the past, taken considerable resources directly from its operating budget, believing that these are an effective, essential means of learning assistance.

Beginning in 1990-1991, the English-language cegeps received a total of almost 22 additional teaching positions for the purpose of academic support; a number of these resources can surely be set aside for various forms of language assistance, such as those offered by the learning centres. It must be determined, in light of a more in-depth analysis, if these resources are sufficient or if additional financial support should be granted to the learning centres of English-language colleges, given the students' need for remedial English instruction.

5) **The Conseil des collèges recommends that the Minister of Higher Education and Science analyze, in conjunction with the English-language colleges, the financial needs of their learning centres and grant them, if necessary, financial support for the language services they offer.**

2.6 Facutly Development in other Subjects

Teachers of other subjects are not fully aware of their responsibility with respect to language instruction or are not adequately prepared to assume it. Information, mobilization and upgrading measures must be adopted if the intentions expressed in the *Cahiers* are to be put into practice. The projects being conducted in the colleges on the theme "Literacy Across the Curriculum" are considered an important means of achieving them by the community as a whole.

6) **The Conseil des collèges recommends that the Minister of Higher Education and Science:**
   - **analyze, in conjunction with the colleges, the available resources for the faculty development in various subjects to enable teachers to assume their responsibilities with respect to language quality;**
   - **grant, if necessary, additional resources to this end.**

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32. And writing centres, where applicable.

2.7 Evaluating Language Skills

It is well known that evaluating language skills is a difficult, complex undertaking, which is why the definition of language instruction and its development over time are often largely based on impressions or approximations. The same is true for the evaluation of college-level mother tongue instruction, whether English or French.

To avoid having to rely again, in a few years' time, on partly impressionistic information it is important that the college network use reliable methods to evaluate student language skills on a regular basis, both before and after college studies. As concerns English language skills, many such instruments exist already; some are used by the colleges for placement tests upon enrollment, and some universities use them to determine the students' level of language skill. A survey would have to be done to choose the best adapted tools, fleshing them out where necessary, and using them on sample groups of students chosen through proven statistical methods.

The possibility of using the Secondary V test for this purpose would also have to be looked into. It is unfortunate that the English and French tests were compiled on very different bases, so that it is difficult to compare the results of the two tests.

7) **The Conseil des collèges recommends that the Minister of Higher Education and Science, in conjunction with the colleges, choose adequate tools for the evaluation of student language skills — or create such tools — and conduct such evaluations on a regular basis on a sufficient number of students to monitor the development of the situation.**

2.8 College Action

A number of the above recommendations formulated for the Minister are designed to consolidate the action being taken in the colleges to offer students adequate language instruction. The Conseil has observed, in the college community, a will to grant high priority to this objective, and the action already undertaken should be continued.

However, a number of factors, especially the absence of specific objectives common to all, course variety and the presence of remedial courses in the compulsory course bank compromise, in the Conseil's opinion, the coherence of education and of the network. Although the responsibility for the general structure of the programs falls mainly to the Department, the fact remains that local education management is entrusted to the

colleges. Therefore, it is important that, in each institution, an effort be made to provide students with coherent programs and learning paths, with language instruction as an integral component.

8) **The Conseil des collèges recommends that the English-language colleges continue to grant priority to language instruction and, particularly,**
   - **maintain their efforts to offer students appropriate language skill courses, with a limited number of students per section, whether in remedial courses or actual college-level courses;**
   - **provide students any other support required in language learning, whether through learning assistance centres or by other means;**
   - **make teachers as a whole aware of their responsibilities with respect to language, provide them with the necessary upgrading to assume these responsibilities and ensure that all course outlines include objectives pertaining to language quality;**
   - **devote particular attention to the integration of English language instruction into each program and into the various learning paths offered to the students.**

APPENDIX 1

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APPENDIX 2

ENGLISH VERSION OF THE QUOTATIONS FROM THE *CAHIERS DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT COLLÉGIAL*[33]

*1 It is apparent that a percentage of the student population at the CEGEP level have serious deficiencies in language skills.

*2 While the study of literature is the chief objective of these courses, serious attention is paid to the development of writing skills through the rigorous application of the criterion of a one third allocation of both content and evaluation to writing.

*3 ... concern for the students' acquaintance with their literary heritage and the importance of writing ...

*4 ... offer students advanced courses in writing of various kinds ...

*5 The student in a course within the Language Use category receives training in the elements of language use. As the most basic of the English language courses offered within the CEGEP curriculum, its principal objective is to prepare the student for one or two of the succeeding levels of language courses. Language Use courses are concerned with the development of both reading and writing abilities and they may include oral training. They are intended for students who do not possess basic competence, even though they may have a background in English language courses.

*6 Effective Reading and Writing courses aim to bring the student's use of language to the college level. The student gains practice in reading and writing sufficient for either the succeeding level of language course or for CORE literature courses. Courses in this category are intended to hone the interpretive and expressive skills of students whose reading and writing, while functional, require additional development.

*7 Composition and Literature courses are intended to serve two purposes: to provide entering students, whose language skills are adequate but weak, an introduction to college level literary studies with a stronger emphasis on basic textual interpretation and the construction of the literary essay that is found in CORE literature courses; and to serve as transition courses between the lower level skills courses and the CORE courses. While the subject matter of these courses is literature or productions in various media, strong emphasis is placed on written response.

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33. See Direction des affaires éducatives, *603 English language and literature (Mother tongue)*, [Québec], Ministère de l'Éducation, Direction générale de l'enseignement collégial, 1984, 53 p.

*8 Education concerns itself with developing the power of thought, and this power is intimately connected with the power to verbalize: to formulate, to organize, to savour and to communicate what the mind is capable of perceiving.

*9 ... to introduce the students to the study of language and literature; to develop skill and pleasure in reading, writing and speaking ...

*10 [The paragraph containing this statement does not appear in the English version of the Cahiers!]

*11 It is not usual that students will take all four of their required CORE courses from among the General Language Categories. Where such a selection is the case, the cicumstances will be deemed exceptional ...

CONSEIL DES COLLÈGES
1990-1991

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